

*Washington Visit by Prime Minister*

general terms, with particular reference to the declaration of policy made yesterday by the King of Laos.

As to NATO, the President and I agreed that the United States and Canada, with all member nations, must collaborate in the work of building up the cohesion and unity of the alliance. I drew the President's attention to my continuing view that there are certain problems facing NATO which will require the attention of heads of government as soon as it is possible for them to be assembled.

In the field of joint defence on the North American continent we discussed a number of current questions, including in particular the Canada-United States defence production sharing program.

We also dealt in a general way with the economic field, not going into detail, however, because, as I mentioned earlier, there will be a meeting within the next three weeks of the joint committee on trade and economic affairs at cabinet level.

We discussed the problem of international surpluses and the food for peace program which is now also receiving the attention of the United Nations.

With regard to trade, I gave the President an explanation of Canada's view on trade between our countries and the importance which we attach to improving the trading position of Canada in relation to the United States.

We also discussed the organization for economic co-operation and development and I informed the President that the Canadian government would shortly be submitting the O.E.C.D. convention to parliament for approval. The President assured me that he shared the Canadian view regarding the importance of this convention which is now receiving congressional consideration.

Mr. Speaker, no one could meet with the President without being impressed by his broad and far-sighted view of international affairs. The President and his senior colleagues demonstrated in every way an understanding interest in the relations between our countries. The President revealed a ready desire to preserve the distinctive quality of the Canadian-United States partnership, with each nation discharging its responsibility toward the attainment of the common purpose and without the sacrifice of sovereignty by either country.

In the past we have had the privilege of hearing presidents of the United States speak to the Senate and members of the House of Commons. We have heard President Truman, and President Eisenhower, and I am happy at this time to announce that I extended an invitation—one with which I hope this house and the other place will agree—

to President Kennedy on behalf of the Canadian government to visit Canada at some convenient time before the end of the current session of parliament. The President advised me that he would be glad to accept this invitation, subject to the determination of a time convenient to both our countries.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** The arrangements for the visit will be proceeded with through diplomatic channels. In extending the invitation I expressed the hope that he would mark his first visit to our country as President by consenting to address a joint session of parliament.

To summarize my remarks, I am more than ever convinced of the value of these informal meetings. There is something about our relationship which might well be a model for other nations in the world, as exemplified in the manner which was so evident today when we met together and discussed the problems which face our respective countries. Where there is disagreement we endeavour by mutual concession to arrive at a basis for amicable settlement, thereby epitomizing something which is so necessary in the world today.

This meeting should not be measured in terms of its duration or in the number of flags unfurled but in the opportunity it offered for better acquaintanceship, better understanding and also for making possible a discussion of common problems in a businesslike and informal manner appropriate to the closest of neighbours and friends.

To me this was a revealing and exhilarating experience. The President of the United States has the kind of personality that leaves upon one the impression of a person dedicated to peace, to the raising of economic standards not only in his own country but in all countries, and to the achievement in his day of disarmament among all the nations of the world.

**Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I know it is after six o'clock but perhaps I may be permitted just a word or two to express our pleasure at this time at the Prime Minister's safe and speedy return and our great satisfaction with the message which he has been good enough to give the house about the results of his visit. I am sure all members of the house are particularly happy at the invitation which has been extended to the President to visit Canada. I understand the period is during the present session. That will give the President a good deal of leeway from which to choose a convenient date.